

Barry: 'Loyalty first and foremost'

BARRY GIBB, unofficial leader of the Bee Gees, was planning to leave for a holiday abroad later this week, confident that the big split with his younger brother Robin could be settled, but certain in any case that the group would carry on regardless of Robin's decision.

"At the moment, it would definitely appear to look like a break-up," he has admitted, "especially when it gets to the stage of legal action being taken."

"But we brothers have always had rows, really big ones, but they have always blown over in the end. I cannot help thinking that this will be the case this time."

"It's all a bit upsetting and bewildering when none of us really knows what is happening and are unable to reason with Robin, but I think he knows that it would be a mistake to leave the rest of us."

"I, for example, want to make a career in films some day, but for the time being I must put loyalty to the brothers first and foremost."

"We've been recording without him in the past few days in the hope of finding something suitable for a new single, which shows that we're still determined to keep the group going whatever happens."

"We also did the 'Lulu Show' on Saturday without him, but Robin is not well. When he has fully recovered, I think his feelings will change. He'll realise it would be daft for the Bee Gees to break up — or, at least, for him to leave us."

In view, however, of the legal involvements in the affair, all the Bee Gees have been advised against making definite statements about the issue.

Only latest official word from the Stigwood Organisation on Monday was that Robin's doctor had reported he was not well enough to appear on the "Lulu Show" and a "medical certificate was received."

Stigwood stated: "The certificate says he is suffering from nervous exhaustion and we hope he will be well soon."

In the meantime, while Barry made plans for a holiday, Maurice Gibb accompanied Lulu for a few days' holiday in Cannes with their respective mothers before Lulu's appearance in the Eurovision Song Contest in Madrid. Afterwards the couple return for two days' packing before flying to Acapulco for a minimum fortnight's honeymoon. Then, they return to the States.



cally? How influential, in fact, should a pop star's wife be in the career of her husband? Should she stay in the background or should she speak her mind as Molly has done?

Pop has no parallel case to offer—only opinions, like that of another Bee Gee wife, Joanne Petersen, the superbly efficient former personal assistant to first Brian Epstein and later the Bee Gees manager himself, Robert Stigwood.



Joanne Petersen, Colin's wife

Joanne, who married drummer Colin last July, is adamant about the role the pop star's wife should play. "To interfere can only cause problems," she says. "If Colin comes to me for advice, I'll give him advice, but I wouldn't stand up and voice my opinions too strongly. Neither would I interfere in meetings. If I was a manager I would take offence if the wives of my artists interfered."

"As far as we are concerned, Colin has got enough sense to know what's good or bad for him. There'll always be arguments with four or five in a group, but

BEE GEES CRISIS

The story so far

THE BIG Bee Gees crisis—in which Robin Gibb, often lead singer and always invaluable co-songwriter, has stated his intention of leaving the group to go solo and manager Robert Stigwood has issued a writ restraining him—really began last July when Robin was taken ill with acute exhaustion, suffered a relapse and caused chaos to the Bee Gees' American tour at the time.

Robin has never fully recovered his health, but the first real indication of a rift between him and the rest of the group came midway through February when "First Of May" was issued as the Bee Gees' new single, featuring exclusively the voice of elder brother Barry.

The B-side, "Lamplight", was written and sung by Robin and he angrily complained that this should have taken preference to "First Of May," announcing he wasn't speaking to Robert Stigwood.

Then, March 6, the Bee Gees appeared on "Top Of The Pops" to promote "First Of May." "All," recalls Barry, "seemed amicable." But it was the last time the brothers saw Robin before the storm broke the following weekend (March 15).

Then Robin announced his decision to leave, with or without the other brothers, and also form a fresh pop organisation, Bow and Arrow. "There is a rift between us," he said. "I am not on talking terms with Stigwood." His wife Molly added: "Someone has got to say something" and proceeded to protest that Robin was not getting enough credit for the group's

success.

Events then speeded up last week.

Monday: Robin changes his phone number; his brothers make unsuccessful attempts to contact him; the Stigwood Organisation state that he cannot leave since he is contracted for at least three more years.

Tuesday: While Molly Gibb keeps the phone off the hook in their Knightsbridge home, Robin sees Stigwood with legal advisers. Other Bee Gees see Stigwood.

Wednesday: Stigwood issues the terse statement that he is suing Robin. The statement says: "Solicitors acting on behalf of the Robert Stigwood Organisation have issued a writ against Robin Gibb and Robin Gibb Ltd. claiming a declaration, damages and injunctions. This is now being served. The company's solicitors—Messrs. Wright and Webb—have retained Mr. Quintin Hogg Q.C. and Mr. David Sullivan Q.C."

Thursday and Friday: The rest of the group shrug their shoulders and go to evening recording sessions, without Robin, and try to make a new single. Nothing satisfactory emerges.

Saturday: Rest of the group appear on the Lulu TV show, wave at the cameras and Barry and Maurice wish their "ill" brother well. Robin's doctor has meanwhile stated that Robin is "too ill" to appear.

Sunday: Maurice Gibb, apparently unperturbed, leaves smiling for a few days' holiday in Paris and Cannes with Lulu before her Eurovision appearance at the weekend.

And Robin and Molly remain unavailable to callers.

and chatted and came to an agreement and parted amicably. There was no bitterness—we are still friends. We can't take another member leaving, and, despite what Barry has said in Disc, I don't think the three of us—him,

own father, Hughie Gibb.

51-year-old

to keep Robin in the group and we are right behind him. The fans should be made to realise that Robert is acting entirely in Robin's interests. It's not a selfish thing at all. He knows and we all know that Robin can't expect to

Martha cancel

MARTHA REID, wife of the late Van Cliburn, is due to leave for Britain—due Tuesday (April 1). Martha was in Detroit last week, but had been ordered by doctors for at least a week. Her visit has been postponed until later in the year.

The tour—was due to open at the Gaumont Agency, but made an unannounced bid to the theatre.

He told Disc that he was ashamed. Martha was going forward to the theatre to hope to fix the year.

Supporting group arrive today (Tuesday) on Flight BA 105 at 10.30 a.m.—for their new single will be the old hit "Let's Hang On" by Denny Randell and the group's "Breaking Walls Of Heartache" their last visit, but signed a replacement, Ridley, who has

Clapton Bruce super

A "SUPERSTARS" TV spectacular British and American musicians Eric Clapton, Bruce Springsteen and Rod Stewart will be shown in Britain.

The show, a "session" shot in London, was filmed in London last week by Colortel, which made the show the first of the Stones' Rock'n'Roll and produced by son.

Also starring Stills, ex-Buffalo Springfield, who has just completed with Graham Nash and Crosby in America. Buddy Guy and Stuart Smith will appear at the Colosseum.

Jimmi Hendrix, who the star line-up, due for the show because was delayed in New Orleans. Graham Nash, Byrd Dave Crosby, and others, were stranded in New Orleans, missed their spot.

The show will be screened as a one-off event.